

E-LABorations

Montana DPHHS Environmental Laboratory Updates

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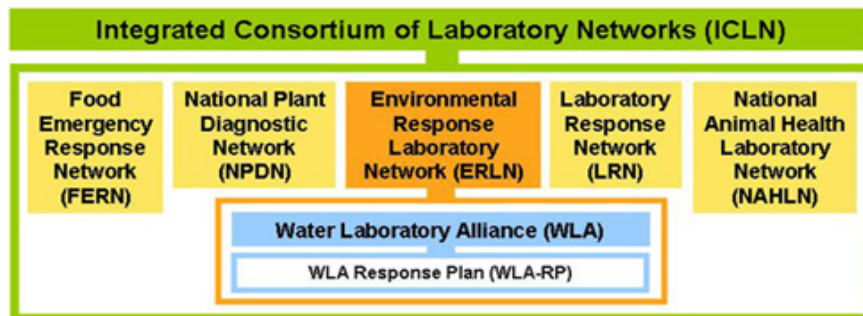
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If you have events or stories to include in future issues please submit them by email to: Joel Felix
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Integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks

The integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks (ICLN) was established by a Memorandum of Agreement among ten Federal Departments/Agencies in June 2005.

Their Vision was to establish a U.S. homeland security infrastructure with a coordinated and operational system of laboratory networks to provide **timely, high quality, and interpretable results** for early detection and effective consequence management of acts of terrorism and other events requiring an integrated laboratory response.



ERLN Begins Recruitment

On the heels of a decade of success with the LRN (see pg 2), the EPA has launched the Environmental Response Laboratory Network (ERLN) as its newest member of the ICLN. The EPA is recruiting State, Federal, local, and commercial laboratories. This creates an **opportunity for your lab** to become involved as a member of the national response efforts. The ERLN is coordinating these recruitment efforts with the launch of EPA's Water Laboratory Alliance, a new part of the ERLN that focuses on State and local drinking and waste water utility laboratories.

Benefits of ERLN Membership

- Training and Exercise Opportunities
- Recognition as a Homeland Security Asset
- Improved Communications with Member Laboratories
- Integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks (ICLN) Support

EPA established the Environmental Response Laboratory Network (ERLN) to assist in addressing chemical, biological, and radiological threats during nationally significant incidents. The ERLN is managed by EPA's Office of Emergency Management and serves as a national network of laboratories that can be accessed as needed to support large scale environmental responses by providing consistent analytical capabilities, capacities, and quality data in a systematic, coordinated response. **The ERLN integrates capabilities of existing public sector laboratories with accredited private sector labs to support environmental responses.**

To learn more about membership and possible reimbursement opportunities go to the following link: <http://www.epa.gov/erln/join.html>

The deadline for application is March 30, 2010.

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Thank You from DEQ

The PWS TCR Rule Managers, [Laura Andersen](#) and [Charyn Ayoub](#), would like to thank the Labs for your continued support and cooperation with our pre-compliance requests. This process, made effective by the labs, has helped PWS to reduce the number of violations we issue every month and build better relationships with our systems. The Lab-DEQ relationship has greatly improved over the last two years as well, leading to fewer violations and happier customers, as well as protecting public health.



A Decade of Success Laboratory Response Network

The Nation's Laboratory Emergency Response System

In the late 1990s, most Americans were more concerned about a computer bug than a biological one. While the nation's collective attention was fixed on Y2K, a small group of CDC staff and their colleagues at the FBI, Department of Defense (DOD) and Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) were quietly piecing together a network of public health laboratories that would later become a model for laboratory preparedness around the globe. The first plan for the LRN was sketched on a cocktail napkin following a long day of meetings.

The Laboratory Response Network, a diverse network of domestic and international laboratories, provides diagnostic capacity to identify agents that may be connected to biological or chemical terrorism events and infectious diseases.

The LRN has just celebrated its 10th anniversary, and since its creation, the LRN has answered the call to prepare for and respond to the public health threats of our day. Just two years into the program, the LRN played a pivotal role in identifying *Bacillus anthracis* in the first victim of the 2001 anthrax attacks. SARS, monkeypox, *E. coli* food contamination, ricin toxin and H5N1 (Asian influenza) top the list of the LRN's participation in national public health preparedness and response.

CDC's commitment to the LRN development involved cross-cutting many of its branches and partnering agencies. Millions of dollars were provided to the states to improve the public health infrastructure through cooperative agreements.

The LRN's success in responding to the 2001 anthrax letters established it as a national asset in public health emergency preparedness and response. The LRN expanded in the years that followed 2001. In 2003, the LRN added the Chemical Agent testing network. The expansion of the LRN was driven by national security needs, but executed through an array of internal and external partnerships.

The creation of the LRN involved public health working together with law enforcement to address national security threats and led to a strong partnership that continues today. The LRN also maintains active partnerships with the Department of Homeland Security, American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians, Environmental Protection Agency, Food and Drug Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, American Society of Microbiology, Department of State, Customs and Border Protection, and a number of international government agencies, such as public health agencies in Canada, Mexico and Australia. These partnerships have helped remove obstacles that can impede responses, and serve as the cornerstone of the LRN's successes.

In just 10 short years, the LRN has built a proud history. It has restored America's public health laboratories to their rightful place in protecting the public's health, and is regarded as a national asset for preparedness and response. But LRN leadership and its members are not content with past successes. There is an understanding that the LRN must continue to evolve and meet future threats, large and small. Looking ahead, continuing the LRN strategy to include all-hazards will require the same adept collaboration and partnership with stakeholders in emerging infectious disease prevention.